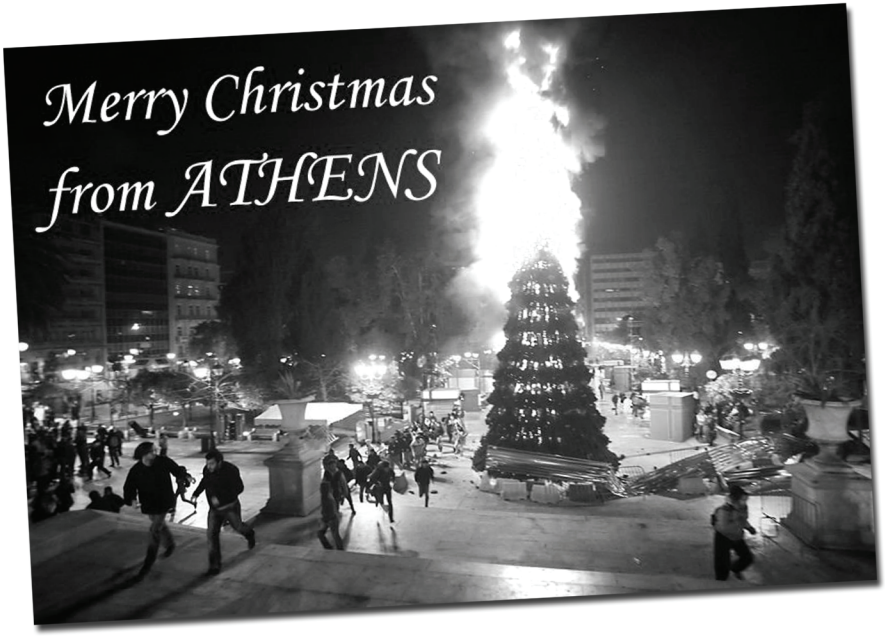
MUTINY

A PAPER OF ANARCHISTIC IDEAS & ACTIONS

ISSUE #34 JANUARY 2009



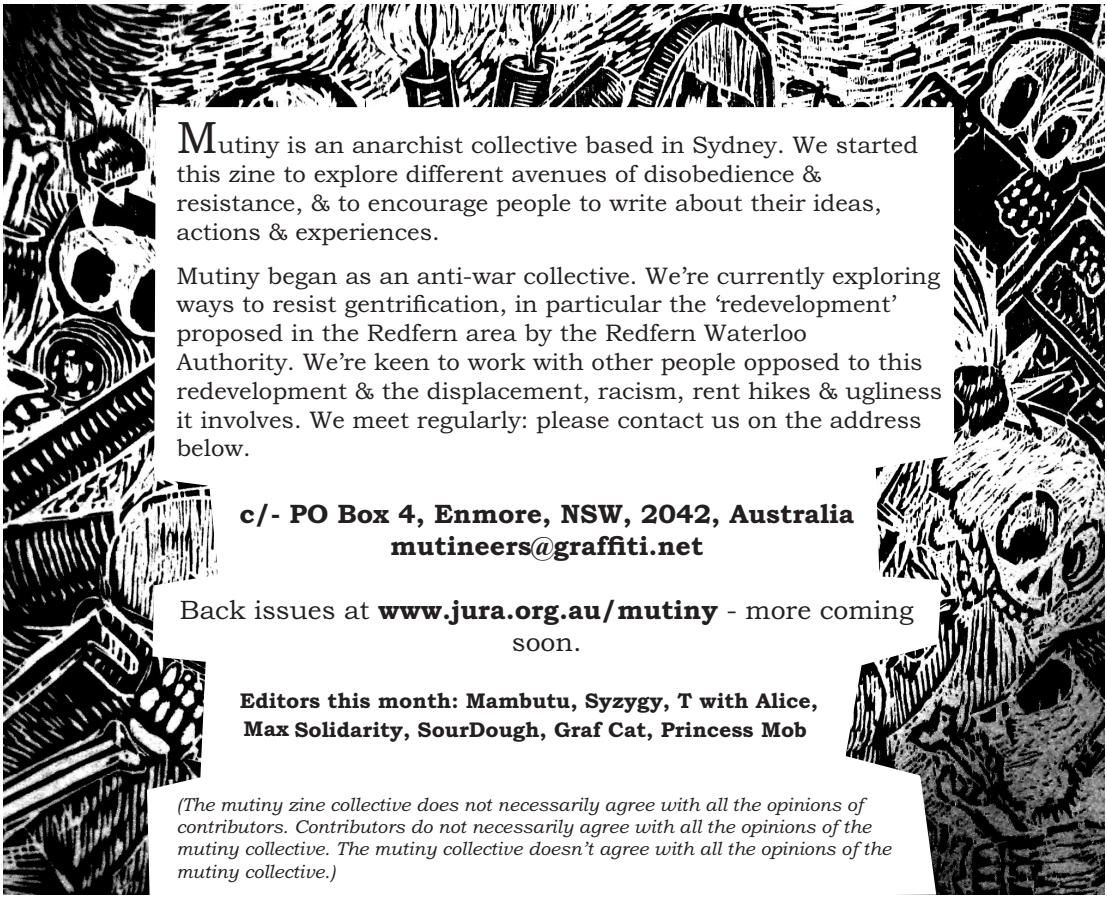
Uprising in Greece

20 Theses Against Green Capitalism

Notes on 'Militant Research' and Organisation

Plus News and Reviews

Free!



Mutiny is an anarchist collective based in Sydney. We started this zine to explore different avenues of disobedience & resistance, & to encourage people to write about their ideas, actions & experiences.

Mutiny began as an anti-war collective. We're currently exploring ways to resist gentrification, in particular the 'redevelopment' proposed in the Redfern area by the Redfern Waterloo Authority. We're keen to work with other people opposed to this redevelopment & the displacement, racism, rent hikes & ugliness it involves. We meet regularly: please contact us on the address below.

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Back issues at **www.jura.org.au/mutiny** - more coming soon.

Editors this month: Mambutu, Syzygy, T with Alice, Max Solidarity, SourDough, Graf Cat, Princess Mob

(The mutiny zine collective does not necessarily agree with all the opinions of contributors. Contributors do not necessarily agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective. The mutiny collective doesn't agree with all the opinions of the mutiny collective.)

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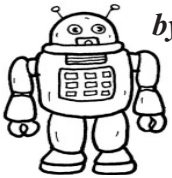
'Militant Research' and Organisation



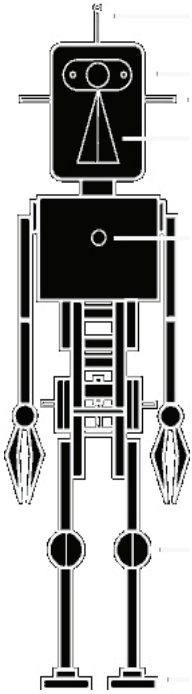
by Bad Robot

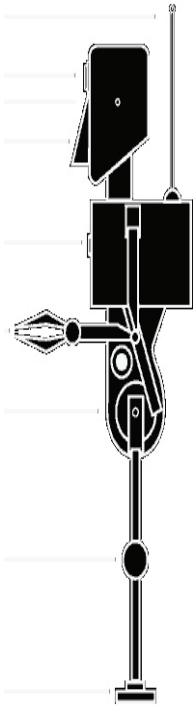
Out of all the disarray of recent years, out of the successes and failures of the struggles against capitalism, what now is the relationship between the need for a renewal of forms and methods of struggle, a continuity from the past, and the capacity for new projects to be effective? That capital (or whatever term you prefer to capture that force which struggles to separate, exploit and turn our own desires against us) has had some success in recent decades in blocking, fracturing and repressing emancipatory political movements is obviously worth acknowledging. However, while acknowledging this, a project of struggle has to work and view things from the perspective of the multitude, or the proletariat, or the oppressed, or whatever term you prefer. What I'm thinking about is how collective participation occurs towards the amplification, expansion and realisation of proletarian, or radical, desires, practices and relationships.

One thing that has characterised my own experience of political activity in recent years has been a feeling of uncertainty: an uncertainty about how to think about political movement, class struggle and organisation. I am sure there are problems with the way in which I am confronting the question of movement, struggle and organisation, but it seems clear to me that 'traditional' forms of organisation are increasingly problematic and even bankrupt. The idea of the party taking the truth to the masses or of the small collective achieving such an act that others will be spurred on and woken from their slumber... - I mean really, these are dull politics, aren't they? I am not arguing that specific organisations shouldn't exist, and obviously these are very crude characterisations of organisation. What I suggest is that we need to leave behind ideas of 'the party' or 'the collective' that make this separation between those who act on political initiative and those who respond to them. How to do this? I think there is no single or clear answer to this question. However, one thing that is needed is a politics and practice of experimentation. This of course means many things, but I think militant research is one particular approach worth considering.

The term militant research sets off some warning bells in my opinion, like, isn't this the same shit as the all knowing radical, activist-type jerk preaching to the class about what they really should be doing? Or, telling them the truth of their condition, as if one's radical political perspective is a better description and engagement with material reality than actual dialogue and assemblage. In another sense, isn't militant research just something done by academic university types, social scientists and others, turning real lived experiences and struggles into data to prove hypotheses constructed inside a laboratory to be bought and sold in journals and books? In short, the answer to these questions is no, why bother mentioning it if the answer was yes...

There is a long history of initiatives that could be described as, or that have in some way informed the practices of militant research. Marx's workers' inquiry of 1880, the Situationist International, the work of *Operaismo* and *Autonomia* in Italy during the 1960s and 70s among others, are all examples of what could be called militant research. Each of these particular projects, sought to work within and from the perspective of struggle. The general relationship between the researcher and the 'passive' research subject is broken down. It is replaced with dialogue and the co-production of knowledge by those involved in a particular context and place of class struggle. The development of political practice and strategy isn't founded upon theory





applied to struggle, but arises from within and through processes of struggle itself.

It is difficult to try and set out in a short article what militant research 'is'. Doing so, to some extent, contradicts the very politics and practice of militant research - how can a practice that seeks to articulate and intervene in specific situations whilst refusing fixed forms and ideology be explained in general terms? In another sense, militant research requires that those involved leave behind assumptions and ideals constructed prior to the project. This is one way in which militant research differs from those forms of organisation and research crudely characterised above. Militant research shouldn't seek to convince others of the correct party line, or of the virtues of anarchism, for example, and measure political success based on others' consumption of these politics. Rather, it is a way of collectively seeking to understand and intervene in the material contradictions of capital as they occur in everyday life. As a method of political intervention, it does not begin from a previously constructed set of knowledges about the world; it is based on a process of "working from what is as opposed to what ought to be."

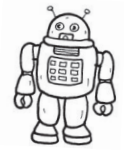
I have looked at some of the work done by two groups, *Precarias a la Deriva (Precarious Women Workers Adrift)* based in Spain, and *Colectivo Situaciones*, based in Argentina. In a few articles written by these groups, describing how they have conducted militant research, there is a lot of political value. As the colectivo situaciones have put it, in their experience the dissolving of ideology as the basis for organisation, or as the "cement of cohesion" has been of utmost importance - regardless of whether the ideology was autonomist, anarchist or whatever. What arises from this approach is the ability to let the politics develop from the assembly or encounter that is at the basis of the research and intervention. This doesn't mean that we have to abandon our politics altogether, and dissolve all groups and organisations that we may be involved in, but that when we look to find and articulate the places of class power in the contemporary context, leaving behind ideology is useful, and benefits the process of constructing commonality. Moreover, this commonality needn't be seen as a reduction of difference, or as a process of homogenising subjectivity, points of antagonism and methods of organisation. Rather it is one of seeking to identify and then expand the basis of commonality.

As *Precarias* put it concerning reasons for conducting militant research, it is "a desire for common ground when the common ground is shattered." If there is now virtually nowhere that capital doesn't reach, and if part of capital's strategy of managing this condition is through an increased fracturing of social relationships and imposition of precarity (as a general condition, not just as description of certain workers), this poses questions that need to be confronted organisationally. This, of course, seems obvious. But if the terrains, the spatial configuration of the places of exploitation have been scrambled, then how do you construct commonality and organisation in this condition. In other words, for all of those who are still put to

work by/for capital (everyone) but whose workplace(s) doesn't allow for organisation and subversion in the same way that a factory might have, how to share experiences and build organisation? It seems to me that militant research embodies an attempt to confront this problem, and this condition. Militant research collectives have sought to do this, without fixing onto established forms of organisation, seeking dialogue to inform intervention and organisation. Militant research can be seen to function as both an investigation into the composition of class at any given point, and also as a project of co-producing knowledge and relevant, immanent political formations in the immediate context.

This article didn't really achieve what it was intended to, which was essentially to talk about militant research in a way that contributed to laying the foundation for a proposal to try to undertake such a project in Australia. Despite this, it seems as though such a project could still be useful. The acuteness of capital's contradictions in periods of 'crisis' (surely crisis has been capital's general condition for a while now) I think increases the pertinence of an approach to political intervention as articulated through practices like militant research.

Articles that were looked at before writing this, all available online -



Precarias a la Deriva - A Very Careful Strike - Four Hypotheses
First Stutterings of Precarias a la Deriva
Adrift through the Circuits of Feminised Precarious Work

Colectivo Situaciones - On the Researcher-Militant
Something More on Research militancy

UPCOMMING EVENTS:

22 ENMORE RD:

Black Rose monthly film screening 25th January @ 6.30pm
Babakiueria ("Barbecue Area") A satirical look at racial stereotypes in Australia

LITTLE FISH - FISH MARKETS

Sunday the 1st of February - Zine stall at 1pm and live music 3pm.

JURA BOOKS 440 PARRAMATTA ROAD PETERSHAM:

"Can You Hear Me?" - An Autonomous Women's Film Event 17 January
A night for women (including women identifiers) to celebrate creativity, women's history and cultural endeavours. **FREE vegan dinner at 6pm! Followed by screening of the film "Can You Hear Me? Israeli and Palestinian Women Fight for Peace"**

Big working bee to put up the library shelves!
Thurs 15th Jan 2-7pm **Fri 16th Jan 2-7pm**
Sat 17th Jan 12-5pm **Sun 18th Jan 12-5pm**

PROTEST THE INHUMANE TERRORISING OF GAZA

Assemble at the Sydney Town Hall or Melbourne State Library - 2pm Sunday the 18th of January

UPRISING IN GREECE

On December 6th, police shot and killed 15-year old Alexandros Grigoropoulos in cold blood in the Eksarhia district of Athens. This sparked off a wave of demonstrations, riots, occupations and assemblies across Greece. The popular rebellion is continuing: see http://www.occupiedlondon.org/blog for updates from participants.

These two texts (slightly edited for length) come from two occupations in Athens.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE POLYTECHNIC OCCUPATION

Immediately after the police murder of Alexandros Grigoropoulos and the first clashes in the streets of Exarchia, the Polytechnic university was occupied and turned into a focus for the expression of social rage. As a space historically and symbolically connected with the struggle against Authority - from the period of dictatorship until today's modern totalitarian democracy - the Polytechnic became the place where hundreds of people gathered spontaneously: comrades, youth and workers, jobless, pupils, immigrants, students...

The following days demonstrations of thousands of people ended in riots and attacks against banks, ministries and big department stores, occupations of schools and public buildings, with young children besieging and assaulting policestations, the riot police guarding Koridallos prison and the Parliament. This revolt that was simmering in the conditions of a generalised attack by the state and the bosses against society, growing in the reality of the everyday death of freedom and dignity that is reserved for the oppressed people by the increasing exclusion, poverty, exploitation, repression and control. This revolt that was persistently being "prepared", even in the darkest times of state and fascist terrorism, through every small or big gesture of resistance against submission and surrender, keeping open the way for many more people to meet in the streets.

In this explosive social reality, the occupied Polytechnic became a point of reference for direct confrontation with the state, in all forms and with all possible means, through consecutive insurrectionary events that burned down the order and security of the bosses, smashing the fake image of social consent to their murderous intentions. It became a place where rebellious social and political subjects met and influenced one another, through the general assemblies and their daily presence in the occupation. It functioned as a base for counter-information, through communiqués and posters, its blog, radio station, and with the PA system sending the messages and the news of the ongoing revolt.

For 18 days as a stable point of the revolt that expanded, the occupied Polytechnic was a continuous call of insubordination to the people resisting all over the world, and a permanent sign of solidarity to the hostages taken by the state from this struggle. It became the territory we used in order to diffuse the message of solidarity between the oppressed, of self-organisation and of a social and class counter-attack against the world of Authority, its mechanisms and its symbols. These elements and values of the struggle created the ground for the oppressed to meet in rebellion, armed our consciences and, maybe for the first time, became so widely employed by so many

people of different ages and different nationalities, with whom anarchists and anti-authoritarians shared the same slogans against the police, the same words, the same practices of struggle, the same rage against those who are looting our lives, and, many times, the same vision for a world of freedom, equality and solidarity.

For this reason, repression was not only expressed as of police brutality, arrests and imprisonment, but also with an intense ideological attack from by all sides of the political system which saw its foundations trembling when repression, in which it is based, was not only unable to restrain the waves of revolt, but, on the contrary, caused them in the first place. This ideological attack targeted anarchists, as a political and unmediated part of the revolted, exactly because of the impact their words and actions had, and because of the danger that is presented for the state when they communicate and coordinate with the thousands of the oppressed. In this context, there was a hysterical effort to divide the revolted in “good pupils” on one hand, and “evil hooded anarchists” or”immigrant looters” on the other, as well as the good old myth about provocateurs, in order to exhaust the social explosion, to criminalise, isolate and crush the points of reference of this revolt. This is the same rhetoric of repression that led to the murder of A. Grigoropoulos, as it labels specific political-social milieus, spaces and people as the “enemy within” on which state violence should be”legitimately” enforced.

The Polytechnic was targeted on a daily basis by statements made by politicians and a slander campaign by the mass media. After clashes around the Polytechnic the night of December 20, the state threatened to proceed to a police raid, after suspending the academic asylum in the campus [laws which forbid police from entering university grounds in Greece - eds], despite the disagreement of the university authorities. Their intentions were defeated because the occupiers refused to obey to any ultimatum, issued an open call to people to come and support the occupation, and proceeded with a planned prisoner solidarity gig on the 22nd of December which gathered hundreds of people at the Polytechnic. Threats of an immediate eviction returned the following day. While the assembly was discussing the end of the occupation, we were informed by political and academic figures that the ministry of Interior and the police were demanding our immediate exit from the campus otherwise the cops would invade. The reply of the occupiers was that the Polytechnic does not belong to the ministry or to police; it belongs to the people of the struggle who decide on what to do based exclusively on criteria of the movement and do not accept blackmails and ultimatums by the assassins. This way the Polytechnic occupation was prolonged for one more day.

No repressive project and no ideological attack managed or will manage to force the return to normality and to impose social and class pacification. Nothing is the same any more! Fear, isolation and the dominant social divisions were surpassed, leading

thousands of young people, women and men of every age, refugees and migrants, workers and jobless to stand together in the streets and behind barricades fighting the tyrants of our life, our dignity and freedom. This is a reality lighting with its flames the future of revolt, both its intensification and deepening, until the absolute subversion of the world of the bosses. Because we shouted in all ways that those days belong to Alexis, to Michalis Kaltezas, to Carlo Giuliani, to Christoforos Marinos, to Michalis Prekas, to Maria Koulouri and to all comrades murdered by the uniformed assassins of the state; they aren't though days that belong to death, but to LIFE! To life that blossoms in the struggles, in the barricades, in the revolt that continues.

Ending the Polytechnic occupation after 18 days, we send our warmest solidarity to all people who became part of this revolt in their many ways, not only in Greece but also in numerous countries of Europe, of South and North America, Asia and Australia-N.Zealand. To all those with whom we met and we will stay together, fighting for the liberation of the prisoners of this revolt, but also for its continuation until global social liberation. For a world without masters and slaves, without police and armies, without borders and prisons.

The Polytechnic Occupation 12/24/08

STATEMENT FROM OCCUPIED TRADE UNION OFFICES

This statement comes from the occupation of the GSEE, the national trade union in Greece.

Declaration

We will either determine our history ourselves or let it be determined without us

We, manual workers, employees, jobless, temporary workers, local or migrants, are not passive tv-viewers. Since the murder of Alexandros Grigoropoulos on Saturday night we participate in the demonstrations, the clashes with the police, the occupations of the centre or the neighborhoods. Time and again we had to leave work and our daily obligations to take the streets with the students, the university students and the other proletarians in struggle.

We decided to occupy the buildings of GSEE.

-To turn it into a space of free expression and a meeting point of workers.

-To disperse the media-touted myth that the workers were and are absent from the clashes, and that the rage of these days was an affair of some 500 "mask-bearers",

"hooligans" or some other fairy tale. That on the tv-screens the workers were presented as victims of the clash, and the capitalist crisis in Greece and Worldwide leads to countless layoffs that the media and their managers deal as a "natural phenomenon".

-To flay and uncover the role of the trade union bureaucracy in the undermining of the insurrection -and not only there. GSEE and the entire trade union mechanism that has supported it for decades and decades, undermine the struggles, bargain our labor power for crumbs, and perpetuate the system of exploitation and wage slavery. The stance of GSEE last Wednesday is quite telling: GSEE cancelled the programmed strikers' demonstration, stopping short at the organization of a brief gathering in Syntagma Sq., making simultaneously sure that the people will be dispersed in a hurry from the Square, fearing that they might get infected by the virus of insurrection.

-To open up this space for the first time -as a continuation of the social opening created by the insurrection itself- a space that has been built by our contributions, a space from which we were excluded. For all these years we trusted our fate on saviours of every kind and we end up losing our dignity. As workers we have to start assuming our responsibilities, and to stop assigning our hopes to leaders or "able" representatives. We have to acquire a voice of our own, to meet up, to talk, to decide, and to act. Against the generalised attack we endure. The creation of collective "grassroot" resistances is the only way.

-To propagate the idea of self-organisation and solidarity in working places, struggle committees and collective grassroot procedures, abolishing the bureaucrat trade unionists.

All these years we gulp the misery, the pandering, the violence in work. We became accustomed to counting the crippled and our dead - the so-called "labor accidents". We became accustomed to ingore the migrants -our class brothers- getting killed. We are tired living with the anxiety of securing a wage, revenue stamps, and a pension that now feels like a distant dream.

As we struggle not to abandon our life in the hands of the bosses and the trade union representatives, likewise we will not abandon no arrested insurgent in the hands of the state and the juridical mechanism.

IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF THE DETAINED
NO CHARGE TO THE ARRESTED
SELF-ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKERS
GENERAL STRIKE
WORKERS' ASSEMBLY IN THE "LIBERATED" BUILDING OF GSEE

Wednesday, 17 December 2008, 18:00
General Assembly of Insurgent Workers

20 THESES AGAINST GREEN capitalism

No to false solutions!

Climate Justice Now!

1. The current world economic crisis marks the end of the neoliberal phase of capitalism. 'Business as usual' (financialisation, deregulation, privatisation…) is thus no longer an option: new spaces of accumulation and types of political regulation will need to be found by governments and corporations to keep capitalism going

2. Alongside the economic and political as well as energy crises, there is another crisis rocking the world: the biocrisis, the result of a suicidal mismatch between the ecological life support system that guarantees our collective human survival and capital's need for constant growth

3. This biocrisis is an immense danger to our collective survival, but like all crises it also presents us, social movements, with a historic opportunity: to really go for capitalism's exposed jugular, its need for unceasing, destructive, insane growth

4. Of the proposals that have emerged from global elites, the only one that promises to address all these crises is the 'Green New Deal'. This is not the cuddly green capitalism 1.0 of organic agriculture and D.I.Y. windmills, but a proposal for a new 'green' phase of capitalism that seeks to generate profits from the piecemeal ecological modernisation of certain key areas of production (cars, energy, etc.)

5. Green capitalism 2.0 cannot solve the biocrisis (climate change and other ecological problems such as the dangerous reduction of biodiversity), but rather tries to profit from it. It therefore does not fundamentally alter the collision course on which any market-driven economy sets humanity with the biosphere.

6. This isn't the 1930s. Then, under the pressure of powerful social movements, the old 'New Deal' redistributed power and wealth downwards. The 'New New' and 'Green New Deal' discussed by Obama, green parties all around the world, and even some multinationals is more about welfare for corporations than for people

7. Green Capitalism won't challenge the power of those who actually produce most greenhouse gases: the energy companies, airlines and carmakers, industrial agriculture, but will simply shower them with more money to help maintain their profit rates by making small ecological changes that will be too little, too late

8. Because globally, working people have lost their power to bargain and demand rights and decent wages, in a green capitalist setup, wages will probably stagnate or even decline to offset the rising costs of 'ecological modernisation'

9. The 'green capitalist state' will be an authoritarian one. Justified by the threat of ecological crisis it will 'manage' the social unrest that will necessarily grow from the impoverishment that lies in the wake of rising cost of living (food, energy, etc.) and falling wages

10. In green capitalism, the poor will have to be excluded from consumption, pushed to the margins, while the wealthy will get to 'offset' their continued environmentally destructive behaviour, shopping and saving the planet at the same time

11. An authoritarian state, massive class inequalities, welfare given to corporations: from the point of view of social and ecological emancipation, green capitalism will be a disaster that we can never recover from. Today, we have a chance to get beyond the suicidal madness of constant growth. Tomorrow, by the time we've all gotten used to the new green regime, that chance may be gone

12. In green capitalism, there is a danger that established, mainstream environmental groups

will come to play the role that trade unions played in the Fordist era: acting as safety valves to make sure that demands for social change, that our collective rage remain within the boundaries set by the needs of capital and governments

13. Albert Einstein defined 'insanity' as "doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." In the past decade, in spite of Kyoto, not only has the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere increased - so, too, has the rate of increase. Do we simply want more of the same? Wouldn't that be insane?

14. International climate agreements promote false solutions that are often more about energy security than climate change. Far from solving the crisis, emissions trading, CMD, joint implementation, offsets and so on, all provide a political shield for the continued production of greenhouse gases with impunity

15. For many communities in the global South, these false solutions (agrofuels, 'green deserts', CDM-projects) are by now often a greater threat than climate change itself

16. Real solutions to the climate crisis won't be dreamt up by governments or corporations. They can only emerge from below, from globally networked social movements for climate justice

17. Such solutions include: no to free trade, no to privatisation, no to flexible mechanisms. Yes to food sovereignty, yes to degrowth, yes to radical democracy and to leaving the resources in the ground

18. As an emerging global climate justice movement, we must fight two enemies: on one hand climate change and the fossilistic capitalism that causes it, and on the other, an emergent green capitalism that won't stop it, but will limit our ability to do so

19. Of course, climate change and free trade aren't the same thing, but: the Copenhagen-protocol will be a central regulatory instance of green capitalism just as the WTO was central to neoliberal capitalism. So how to relate to it? The Danish group KlimaX argues: A good deal is better than no deal - but no deal is way better than a bad one

20. The chance that governments will come up with a 'good deal' in Copenhagen is slim to none. Our aim must therefore be to demand agreement on real solutions. Failing that: to forget Kyoto, and shut down Copenhagen! (whatever the tactic)

By Tadzio Mueller and Alexis Passadakis (12/2008). Alexis is a member of attac Germany's coordinating council, Tadzio a part of the Turbulence editorial collective. They are both active in the emerging climate justice movement, and can be reached at againstgreencapitalism (at) googlemail (dot) com

The Copenhagen COP15 conference is a big summit in December 2009, to negotiate a new international treaty on climate change. It won't offer any real solutions to the world's ecological crisis; a mass blockade and direct actions to stop it are being planned…

The Mutiny Zine Collective does not necessarily agree with all the above points, however we do think that solutions to climate change can only come with a revolutionary rejection of capitalism.

News Briefs

Union Organiser attacked in Greece

On the 27 December 27, the headquarters of ISAP (Athens Piraeus Electric Railway) was occupied in response to a murderous attack against union organiser Konstantina Kuneva on December 23. Konstantina is in intensive care suffering serious sight and respiratory system problems after sulphuric acid was thrown at her face.
Konstantina, one of hundreds of female immigrant cleaners, is general secretary of the Panattic Union of Cleaners and Domestic Personnel. She is a militant union organiser, well known for her stance against various bosses. The week before her attack she clashed with the employer company "OIKOMET" when she demanded that she and her colleagues be paid their full Christmas bonus. Just a short while ago the company fired her mother in an act of revenge and she was transferred to a distant location.
This murderous attack on the part of the employers was well planned. The media, the political parties, the Church, businessmen and union bosses have been trying to discredit and attack the enormous social movement that has exploded after the murder of 15-year-old Alexandros. In this context, the attack on Konstantina isn't discussed in the everyday news.
http://katalipsihsap.wordpress.com/

Another death in custody, Alice Springs

A 34 year old man died in the Alice Springs police watch house on the morning of January 10. Police were said to be investigating as this goes to print; history doesn't give us much faith that police investigations have much to do with truth or justice.

Direct action in Iceland

Since early this winter, Iceland has been facing economic crisis. The three major business banks have been nationalised, which places their debt on the people's shoulders. People have been losing their life savings, loans have increased, many people have lost their jobs and more and more face the threat of losing their houses. The government has gained a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).This will likely lead to the usual aftermath of an IMF loan: the privatisation of social systems such as the health care and the education system, and more destruction of the Icelandic wilderness.
For more than two months people gathered weekly in a park in front of the parliament. The first protests demanded that the government explain what was going on, but soon people realised that it was not enough to ask the government to speak, so the protests took up another and more radical demand: the resignation of the government.
During a protest on Saturday November 8th, an anarchist climbed on top of the parliament and hung the flag of Bónus, Iceland's cheapest supermarket, which has a pink pig on it. People celebrated this act and sang along "The government is a cheap and dirty pig!"
The arrest of the flag-bearer a week later sparked a 500-strong demonstration at the police station where he was held. People broke the station windows and broke through the door, where they were pepper sprayed. The prisoner was bailed out by an unknown person.
On Monday December 1, a protest occupied the Central Bank, demanding the resignation of Davíð Oddsson, the chairman of the board and former prime minister. On December 9, 30 people blockaded the prime minister's office where a government meeting was supposed to take place.

Gaza "Intifada now"

At over 1000 people have been killed since the massive initial air assault on December 27, including 270 children and another 3490 people have been wounded. Israel is reported to have dropped over a hundred tons of bombs. Israel has vowed to escalate its war in Gaza after carrying out more deadly air strikes. Troops battled Hamas fighters into a third week despite growing calls for a ceasefire.
In Australia hundreds of protesters have rallied in Sydney, Melbourne and Canberra, demanding that the Federal Government end its support for Israel in the current conflict. Tens of thousands of protestors have rallied across Britain and including thousands of shoes thrown at the prime ministers residence as a Muslim symbol of disgust. In Greece groups and individuals are organising for a national mobilisation/blockade of the port of Astakos in response to a callout from The Popular front for the Liberation of Palestine to stop an emergency shipment of U.S. arms that is planned to leave this month.

Riots in Rosemeadow

18 people have been arrested and six families are now to be evicted after a brawl with police involving more than 100 residents last week at the Rosemeadow public housing estate, near Campbelltown.
According to mainstream media reports, in the days after the brawl residents confronted the police and reporters and said that the riot squad instigated the problems. Police launched Operation Tinaroo last March following five rock-throwing incidents early in 2008.
The Daily Telegraph also reported that a group of 70 residents confronted police after they were lured to the estate with a fake 000 call.
The Howard government pulled $1 billion dollars out of public housing over the past decade.

Internet Censorship

Freedom Against Censorship Thailand (FACT) analysed secret blocklists leaked from Thailand's Ministry of Information and Communication Technology censoring 1,303 websites. The court orders to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) cite reasons of lese majeste (disloyalty to the king) and national security.

Sites blocked include YouTube videos, Thai webboard pages, weblogs referencing Paul Handley's unauthorised biography of Thailand's King Bhumibhol, the webpages of Thai Buddhist social critic, Sulak Sivaraksa who is currently on bail for his fourth accusation of lese majeste, and pages of The Economist. Curiously, Charlie Chaplin videos were also blocked.

In Australia there are plans to put an automated and mandatory internet filter called Clean Feed. This was set in motion by the ALP in 2006 and is currently moving ahead into the next phase of development. It is draconian, technically infeasible, will lead to much slower internet speeds and will be very expensive.
See nocleanfeed.com.

Racist cop gets away with murder even more

A judge overturned a coroner's finding that Mulrunji Doomadgee died in Palm Island watchhouse as a result of three punches thrown by Senior Sergeant Chris Hurley. Although a jury last year acquitted Hurley of manslaughter, the coroner's findings were being used by Doomadgee's family as the basis for a compensation claim. Townsville District Court Bob Pack sparked outrage among Indigenous groups by ordering that a new inquest be held with a new coroner next year.
While Hurley has received a promotion and compensation, Palm Island man Lex Wotton was convicted of rioting on the island after Mulrunji's death and was sentenced to a maximum of six years jail.

SHAC update

The SHAC house in Melbourne has set up a 24-hour picket as they prepare for threatened eviction. On January 5, Melbourne University was granted permission by the Supreme Court to apply for a warrant to reclaim 272 Faraday St Carlton, the site of the Student Housing Action Collective (SHAC) occupation. Homeless students from Melbourne University have been running a successful housing cooperative at SHAC since 20 August 2008.

SHAC were in negotiations with the University until December 18, when the University presented a bogus offer to the students, gave them 45 minutes to sign, then placed five private security guards outside the premises. SHAC find the University's offer unacceptable as it makes no commitment to funding any new subsidised places beyond their existing rental subsidy scheme.

The students involved in the occupation are still hoping for a positive outcome based on the amount of public awareness raised by the occupation, and the political pressure put on the University. Victorian Trades Hall Council Secretary Brian Boyd has stated publicly that the Trades Hall Building Industry Group would take industrial action in the event of a forced eviction. As of the writing the students are still occupying the buildings.
BREAKING NEWS 14/10/09:
SHAC has been evicted this morning by police.

New School occupation, New York

Students at the New School in New York City occupied their university after the university President, Bob Kerrey, sacked the university Provost without reason and tried to appoint himself to the position. Students demanded the immediate resignation of Kerrey, executive vice president James Murtha and the university treasurer, Robert Millard, who is a board member of L3 Communications. This company is currently making a handsome profit from the war in Iraq, in part thanks to their contracts for interrogation "services" at Abu Ghraib. In an international communiqué, the students declared their strong solidarity with the mass mobilisations against education 'reforms' in Italy and the youth uprising in Greece. After three days they won a series of demands, including amnesty for all students involved in the occupation, and the establishment of a committee on Socially Responsible Investing.

Another police spy, Aotearoa

Rob Gilchrist, a Christchurch-based man, was revealed to have spied on activist groups he participated in for more than 10 years. He worked for the NZ Police and was sending information to the Special Investigation Group (SIG). Gilchrist was spying on the Save Happy Valley Coalition, Peace Action Wellington, Auckland Animal Action and many other groups and individuals, and provided police with information on at least three of the defendants in Operation 8, the State Terror raids of October 15 2007. Gilchrist was unmasked when his animal rights and Labour Party activist girlfriend was helping him fix his computer: she found signs of him passing information about protest groups to an anonymous email address.

Reviews

(newspaper)

Wai Quarterly

Wai is a quarterly newspaper, mostly produced out of Melbourne (though with articles from all over Australia), the first issue of which came out last month. It's exciting to see a new, independent anti-capitalist publication, especially in the all-too-small world of the Australian far left.

I particularly liked the cover article on the Student Housing Action Collective in Melbourne. Although eviction orders have come in recently, this seems to be a really inspiring local story of both successful direct action and practical intervention into people's everyday lives. It's great to see direct action understood as not just militant protest but as autonomous community organising more generally.

There are a couple of solid articles critiquing the NT intervention which give a sense of the intense racism at its core. There's also an article by the Mutiny collective, on gentrification and reflecting on our methods of organising (obligatory self-promotion!) and an excellent piece on international students & their struggles.

Perhaps the paper's lay-out could have been more clear-unfortunately it's hard to read the title on the first page! I also would have found it nice for there to have been more of an attempt to articulate an explicitly revolutionary politics across the paper as a whole, rather than generally focusing on social justice themes. There could have been more articles on class & workers' struggles as well.

But, overall, it's definitely a worthwhile project & I look forward to the second issue. You can contribute articles for the new issue to waiquarterly@gmail.com

There's also an online version at www.waiquarterly.wordpress.com

Syzygy

(film)

Quantum of Solace

The latest in the Bond films has what I think is one of the better titles for a film in this franchise. Not that it makes all that much sense, but then again neither does this film. For those who haven't seen the first Bond film with Craig Daniels playing the world's saviour, then you'll be in for a rude shock. Bond has changed. Gone are the cheesy one-liners, the elaborate spy gadgettery and promiscuity: we now have a brooding, jaded, and rather ruthless spy killer.

This movie picks up where the first with Craig left off. Heartbroken, betrayed and out for vengeance, Bond is hunting the people who brought this upon him. Turns out there is a highly organised entity called "the organisation" that apparently is running wild schemes that the British secret service knows nothing about. So the hunt is on: who is a traitor? who isn't?

The hunt takes them to a guy who is using a land conservation charity as cover for an elaborate scheme to overthrow governments and gain control of water resources. There is one great scene where it's explained to a General plotting a coup that if he doesn't cooperate, then someone else will. Hello corporate hegemony!

As far as a mindless action film goes this isn't so bad. Bad guys (who are astoundingly bad shooters!) abound, as do car chases, fisticuffs, tuxedos, and product placements. For anyone expecting more than that maybe don't bother. The film falls prey to too many sub-plots. There are two stories of revenge going: one about what the bad guys are planning, and the other about whether or not Bond is off the rails. You end up walking away wondering exactly who x person was and why they did what they did.

Of course the politics in this movie are very average, but seriously, it's James Bond - what were you expecting? I would write about the gender representation but really, it's not too hard to imagine what it was like. It is Hollywood after all. As long as you remember that and leave your political analysis at the door you could find something to enjoy here.

TyrannosaurusWolf

In this months ZINE:

- Bad Robot argues that it's time to get militant about our research as one solution to outdated methods of revolutionary organising.

- From the streets of Greece, two firsthand accounts of the politics and practices of the uprising that began in December.

- 20 arguments against the idea that capitalism can be part of any solution to environmental problems.

- News from Greece, Iceland, Gaza, Thailand, New York, Aotearoa, Palm Island, Melbourne, Alice Springs andSydney

- Reviews of *Wai Quarterly* and the new Bond film, *Quantum of Solace*.